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The objectives of the resource teacher program were to extend the learning of the educationally able and gifted, as well as those children having special interests and abilities, to extend the use of resource materials in the library for all children, and to work toward the improvement of the instructional program. Each school had been encouraged to develop its own plan for the use of the resource teacher, a plan that reflected that particular school community, the needs and aspirations of the students and staff. Consequently, there was a diversity of plans in operation.

The role of the resource teacher was to offer an enriched program in the regular classroom, but some of these children needed special guidance and educational provisions. It was in this last situation that the resource teacher filled a unique role by stimulating student interest, increasing student self-confidence, encouraging development of new skills, and providing an opportunity for student growth through constructive creative powers.

The resource teacher program served as a stiumlus for improving the effectiveness of the staff and the instructional program through the means of cooperative planning and teaching.

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ED001388

The Resource Teacher Program

The Eugene Public School system has incorporated into the educational program over a period of years certain innovations intended to further improve the quality of education. The elementary resource teacher program is one of the facets of this long-range plan.

What is the Resource Teacher Program?

In addition to certain specific objectives, the resource teacher program is guided by three major purposes:

*Extending the learning of the educationally able and gifted, as well as those children having special interests and abilities.

*Extending the use of resource materials in the library for all children.

*Working toward the improvement of the instructional program.

The program, now in its fifth year, provides resource help to all twenty-five elementary schools. Twenty-two full-time resource teachers are provided on the staffs of the larger schools, those with more than ten teachers; two smaller schools being served by a principal who is also a resource person on a part-time basis and four schools having a half-time resource teacher.

The coordinator of the program provides leadership for the resource teachers, consults with and aids individual teachers and staffs, and is responsible for necessary in-service.

All Schools Do Not Have The Same Resource Teacher Program

Each school has its own plan. Within the framework described under the three major purposes, on a district-wide basis approximately fifty per cent of the time of the resource teacher is directed toward improved learning experiences for able and interested groups, the remainder of the time being spent upon extending the use of the school library and improving the total instructional program.

Each school has been encouraged to develop its own plan for the use of the resource teacher, a plan that reflects that particular school community, the needs and aspirations of the students and staff. Consequently there is a diversity of plans in operation.

Each resource teacher is working under a somewhat different plan as to schedules, kinds of group work, emphasis upon library activities and responsibilities, grade levels involved, and the amount of time spent in staff assistance and cooperative planning and teaching.

The resource teacher functions as a regular member of the staff with the same authority and the same responsibilities as those of the classroom teacher.

The Resource Teacher

The criteria used in selecting personnel for the resource teacher assignments are as follows:

*The resource teacher must have demonstrated ability, resourcefulness, and creativity in directing an instructional program in the classroom.

*The resource teacher has demonstrated interest and skill in meeting the individual needs of pupils.

*The resource teacher has varied talents and interests which he can use directly with pupils and staff.

*The resource teacher is adaptable and able to work well with other staff members.

As The Schools Plan

Among the different school plans may be found such listings as workshop classes, interest groups, library skills and research, student councils, "Imaginative Approach to Learning," Great Books Club, SMSG mathematics, French, Able Underachievers, "Creative Thinking and Writing," and cooperative teaching.

Workshop Classes

Although the classroom teacher is primarily the one who establishes

the environment for learning and stimulates and guides the child into challenging avenues of work, he is aided by the resource teacher in this through the use of Workshop classes.

Children whose ability and performance indicate that the challenge of extended learning experiences would be beneficial are given an opportunity to work in a small group situation with the resource teacher over an extended period of time.

The experiences offered ~~generall~~y enrich what is being done in the regular classroom, giving breadth and depth to learning; or are entirely new, but closely related to that which is in process.

There are many variations in the plan for Workshop classes from school to school, but chiefly the pupils in the intermediate grades are involved in those designed for the educationally advanced. Interest groups developing from classroom activities and special interest groups such as French, "Exploring Mathematics" (SMSG mathematics for advanced 6th), school publications, and Junior Great Books are either classified as Workshop classes or interest groups.

Class size varies, but those classes in which children are doing advanced work usually have 10 to 15 pupils, pupils that may be drawn from all the classes from one grade level, from one classroom or from more than one grade level.

Interest Groups

Special interest groups involve many children. They may develop from classroom activities, but in most cases such a group simply reflects a "special" interest in a topic or an activity. The groups may be small or large, involve one class or several.

Classroom teachers, resource teachers, parents and sometimes community resource people combine forces to provide a great variety of opportunities for children to explore an area of interest.

French - French is offered on an optional basis to able and interested children from the 5th and 6th grades through the television series, "Parlons Francais." In many cases this is handled by the resource teacher, or by a classroom teacher relieved from his classroom duties by the resource teacher.

Junior Great Books - Through the Junior Great Books the best in contemporary literature and the classics is available for group enjoyment and study either in Workshop classes or in interest groups. Fifty-five sets of books with ten to a set are used by the resource teachers in their effort to encourage the appreciation and enjoyment of good literature, to give children a meaningful experience with good writing.

Representative of other interest groups listed by the schools are: school chorus, art, sewing, student council, school publications, creative writing, science, and "handling everyday situations".

SMSG Mathematics - Throughout the district 6th grade students who are advanced in mathematics participate in a series of television lessons based on the SMSG mathematics materials. Two lessons a week, from January to June, are presented by the television teacher with the necessary follow-up handled by the resource teacher or the classroom teacher. In some instances the resource teacher is responsible for the entire mathematics program for this group.

It is hoped that this effort not only will be an aid to the classroom teacher in providing for individual differences, interests, and abilities, but will also facilitate the articulation in mathematics between the elementary school and the junior high school.

The School Library

The development of the school library so that its resources and rich opportunities are more accessible at all times to children and teachers

has been given a greater impetus through the resource teacher program. Although the emphasis on this aspect of the total plan for the use of a resource teacher varies from one school to another, he is involved in many ways with the library and its use. A variety of ways are used to help students and classroom teachers toward an effective library program:

*Teaching library use and skills 1-6
*Helping teachers introduce, expand, and review library skills
*Organizing and training adult volunteer library aids
*Developing and maintaining files of instructional materials
*Assisting children doing research or working on a project; teaching necessary skills
*Developing an appreciation and enjoyment of fine literature
*Keeping the library open in the morning before school begins and during the noon hour

Learning materials especially selected for the use of resource teachers are made available through the Resource Library which is housed in the Administration Building. Books, pamphlets, special folders of materials, and certain tapes and transparencies are included in this collection.

The Role of the Resource Teacher

The classroom teacher cannot be expected to have the time or the necessary training to cope effectively with special problems that children have in achieving their potential, to meet the needs of individual children to the degree that is demanded in today's schools.

The needs of many of the academically gifted can be met by an enriched program in the regular classroom, but some of these children need special guidance and educational provisions. It is in this last situation that the resource teacher fills a unique role.

The resource teacher is either directly or indirectly involved in ~~the development~~ meeting ~~of~~ the needs, abilities, and interests of each student in providing whatever help is needed to enable him to develop to his fullest potential.

Students are helped by stimulating their interest, increasing their self-confidence, developing new skills, and providing an opportunity for growth and incentive to use their creative powers constructively.

The resource teacher program serves as a stimulus for improving the effectiveness of staff and the instructional program through the means of cooperative planning and teaching. As a result there are additional opportunities for the introduction and exchange of ideas, greater utilization of staff abilities and competencies, and an increase in the scope and use of instructional materials.

The resource teacher program has great potential for helping to further the realization of the district's vision of a system in which children at every level of ability are encouraged to get the maximum education of which they are capable.

What are the Benefits?

To the Child - Increased depth in learning and range of knowledge and skills
Opportunities to pursue interests and develop talents, to work with others of like abilities and interests
Motivation for the underachiever as well as for the pupil of high achievement
Increased self-direction and self-evaluation, creativity, love of learning, critical thinking, and responsible citizenship.

To the Teacher - Assistance in identifying and meeting special educational needs of children
Help in developing classroom techniques through demonstrations and suggestions
Provision of enrichment aid, suggestions, and materials as well as their use
Assistance in some area of the curriculum through direct teaching by the resource teacher
Assistance in teaching library, research, and study skills, in encouraging an appreciation and love for good literature

To the School - Improvement of instruction through cooperative planning and teaching
Maintenance and continued development of instructional materials center; broadening the range and use of resource materials
Assistance in orienting new teachers, implementing new procedures and programs

Greater flexibility is possible in the handling of school-wide projects, in the use of staff abilities and talents.

We Believe

"That each individual child shall be provided with a stimulating environment and opportunities for learning experiences designed to assist him in realizing his maximum mental, physical, emotional, and social development.

In addition to assisting him in attaining these objectives it is the obligation of the school to make every possible effort to develop in each individual a zeal for continuous learning and self-improvement."

Policy Statement, District 4 School Board.